

Message Text

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PAGE 01 NASSAU 01311 192042Z
ACTION SNM-05

INFO OCT-01 ARA-14 ISO-00 DEAE-00 AID-05 CTME-00 CG-00
DOTE-00 /025 W

-----128161 200205Z /66

R 191926Z JUN 78
FM AMEMBASSY NASSAU
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1153

UNCLAS NASSAU 1311

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SNAR BF
SUBJ: NARCOTICS CONTROL PROGRAM

REF: (A) NASSAU 1122 (B) NASSAU 1272 (C) STATE 7430 AND PREVIOUS

1. THE GROWING PROBLEM OF DRUG TRAFFICKING THROUGH THE BAHAMAS AND THE EMBASSY'S CONCERN THEREWITH WAS THE SUBJECT OF REF A. THIS CONCERN HAS SINCE BEEN CONVEYED TO THE HIGHEST LEVEL OF THE GCOB (REF B) AND THE EMBASSY HAS FOR THE LAST SEVERAL MONTHS BEEN IN FREQUENT CONTACT WITH DEA MIAMI TO URGE INFORMALLY THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A DEA OFFICE IN NASSAU. ALTHOUGH A DEA OFFICE IN NASSAU WOULD BE THE FIRST STEP IN IMPROVING INTERDICTION EFFORTS IN THE BAHAMAS - WHICH WE FEEL WILL BECOME EVEN MORE CRUCIAL WITH TIME - IT IS THE EMBASSY'S OPINION THAT THIS ALONE WILL BE INSUFFICIENT TO ACHIEVE THAT GOAL. TO DO THIS WE MUST FIND MEANS OF ASSISTING BAHAMIAN LAW ENFORCEMENT UNITS BETTER TO POLICE THEIR OWN TERRITORY. IN THIS REGARD THE WILL OF THE ROYAL BAHAMIAN POLICE FORCE PRESENTS NO PROBLEM, THEIR ZEAL IN APPREHENDING NARCOTICS SMUGGLERS HAVING BEEN AMPLY DEMONSTRATED OVER THE LAST FEW YEARS. LIKEWISE, BOTH THE PERSONNEL OF THE CID AND THE MARINE POLICE HAVE PROVEN THEMSELVES SUFFICIENT TO THE TASK AND THE FUNCTION OF THE NEW DEFENSE FORCE WILL FURTHER AUGMENT THE PERSONNEL

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CAPABILITY.

2. WHAT IS MISSING IS THE EQUIPMENT NECESSARY TO TRANSPORT THESE MAN TO THE MORE THAN SEVEN HUNDRED ISLANDS AND CAYS WHICH CONSTITUTE THE BAHAMAS ARCHIPELAGO, THE VERY EXISTENCE OF WHICH AND ITS GEOGRAPHICAL PROPINQUITY TO THE US MAKE IT SO ATTRACTIVE FOR

SMUGGLERS. AT THE PRESENT TIME THE GCOB HAS OR SOON WILL HAVE A TOTAL OF 9 BOATS FOR PATROL DUTY. THE DEFENSE FORCE PLANS SOME DAY TO ADD AN AIR-WING CONSISTING OF ONE OR TWO FIXED WING AIRCRAFT TO AUGMENT THIS FORCE. NO PLANS EXIST TO OUR KNOWLEDGE TO PURCHASE MUCH NEEDED AND (FROM A DRUG INTERDICTION POINT OF VIEW) CRITICAL HELICOPTERS. IT IS OUR VIEW THAT UNTIL THE GCOB LAW ENFORCEMENT AUTHORITIES POSSESS, OR OTHERWISE HAVE THE USE OF, THE PHYSICAL MEANS TO ACCOMPLISH CRUCIAL SURVEILLANCE AND RAPID MOVEMENT, ADEQUATE OR EVEN MINIMAL INTERDICTION EFFORTS HERE WILL BE GREATLY IMPEDED. ANY NARCOTICS CONTROL PROGRAM FOR THE BAHAMAS MUST BEGIN WITH THIS PREMISE.

3. IN ADDITION, GIVEN THE GCOB'S LIMITED RESOURCES AND PRIORITIES (ARE DRUGS TRANSITING THESE ISLANDS PRIMARILY OUR OR THEIR PROBLEM;), THERE IS LITTLE LIKELIHOOD THAT THEY WOULD OR COULD MAKE THE NECESSARY CASH OUTLAY FOR RESOURCE PROCUREMENT. THUS, IN OUR VIEW, WHETHER WE COULD GIVE, LOAN, LEASE OR OTHERWISE PROVIDE SUCH EQUIPMENT TO THE BAHAMAS IS CENTRAL TO AN EFFECTIVE NARCOTICS PROGRAM.

4. WE ARE NOT IN A POSITION TO ESTIMATE THE QUANTITY OR TYPE OF CRAFT NEEDED BY THE GCOB, THEIR COST, NOR FOR THAT MATTER WHETHER THEIR PROCUREMENT BY THE UNCLASSIFIED

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BAHAMAS IS EITHER FEASIBLE OR WITHIN THE SCOPE OF THE NARCOTICS CONTROL PROGRAM DUE TO THE HIGH COST FACTOR INVOLVED. WE REITERATE, HOWEVER, THAT IN OUR VIEW TRAFFICKING WILL INCREASE DRAMATICALLY AND EFFORTS TO STOP IT WILL BE OF LIMITED VALUE WITHOUT THIS ON THE SPOT CAPABILITY. IT IS THEREFORE SUGGESTED THAT THE DEPARTMENT, TOGETHER WITH DEA, CUSTOMS AND COAST GUARD SHOULD MEET AS SOON AS POSSIBLE BOTH TO DISCUSS THE PROBLEM OF NARCOTICS TRAFFICKING THROUGH THE BAHAMAS, AND WHAT PRACTICAL STEPS CAN BE TAKEN TO REDUCE IT INCLUDING THE POSSIBILITY OF AN AIR CAPABILITY FOR BAHAMIAN LAW ENFORCEMENT AUTHORITIES. SCHWARTZ

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DRUG CONTROL, PROGRAMS (PROJECTS)
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 19 jun 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978NASSAU01311
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780255-1112
Format: TEL
From: NASSAU
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780644/aaaabmfc.tel
Line Count: 107
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 7ff54086-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION SNM
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 NASSAU 1122, 78 NASSAU 1272, 78 STATE 7430
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 17 jun 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2299502
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: NARCOTICS CONTROL PROGRAM
TAGS: SNAR, BF
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/7ff54086-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014